

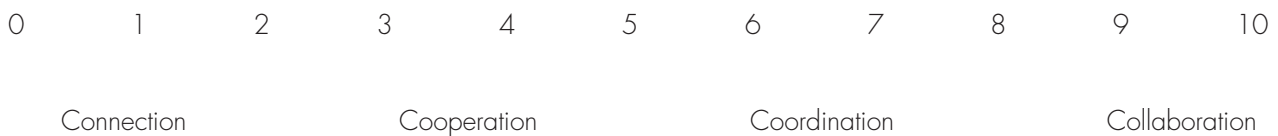
Reciprocal Partnerships Case Study

Background: Obama High School, situated in a small urban city, decided to start an environmental service-learning project to clean an ugly creek bed that circled the school. Jose Carerra, the service-learning coordinator, began this project by photographing the creek bed at several points to spotlight the ugly and unhealthy conditions and talking with the science teachers about possible connections to their curriculum. Recognizing that he needed financial resources and community support, Jose contacted several organizations for assistance, including the local branch of the Bank of America, the Boys and Girls Club, the Director of Community Relations at the local community college, and the Youth Director of the very active Baptist high school youth group. In addition to asking for financial help, Jose shared his two year action plan and invited volunteer participation for the opening steps—two Saturday clean-up days. Six months in to this project, Jose was very discouraged. Initial interest and participation was dropping and the science teachers were starting to talk about dropping their participation.

Task: You are members of a coaching group that Jose asked to come to Obama High School to help him get his service-learning partnership on stronger ground. Use the questions below to analyze the current partnership status and make recommendations for improvement.

A. Analysis

1. What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the service-learning partnership?
2. Where would you place this project on the following spectrum of partnership strength?



B. Recommendations

1. What specific steps would you recommend to help Obama High School move its partnership to a Collaborative partnership?